

# Memorandum for Record 02-03-2012

**From:** KEVIN SULLIVAN, MWFD FIRE CHIEF

**Date:** 2/19/2012

**Re:** Emergency Incident Coleville Housing Explosion 02-03-2012

1. On the evening of February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 while off duty at my place of residence in (b) (6) at approximately 2045hrs. I was sitting in my living room when a large noise that sounded like a vehicle driving through a wall was heard. Looked over at my wife who was beside me on the sofa to ask, "Did you just hear that?" Her reply was "Yes." I explained that I would go check out around the house, when my home phone rang. After my wife answering the home phone, she immediately handed the phone to me only to be told by the Marine Corps Police Dispatch Center that we have had an explosion in Coleville Housing. I advised the dispatcher to immediately start a mandatory recall of off duty firefighters and that I was enroute to Coleville Housing. This all occurred between 2045 hrs - 2110 hr
2. At approximately 2112, I departed the house enroute to Coleville housing area. I was on the road within 2 minutes of the time being notified of the issue. I contacted Captain Keith Preston and informed him to start a mandatory off duty firefighter recall, just in case the notification process was delayed. He informed me that he was notified as well, and was enroute to the location. As was I driving toward the Coleville housing area, you could see large amounts of glowing lights and smoke from that area. Once arrived on scene, at 2123hrs.
3. Upon arrival, my first scene size-up was that we had a lot of blowing debris across the entire Lincoln Military Housing area in Coleville. Flying debris of insulation was scattered throughout the installation. As I headed toward the incident site, there was housing debris scattered all over the roadway and adjacent lawns to the affected house.
4. Once at the scene of the incident, I noticed that Antelope Valley Fire Department (AVFD) and Mono County Paramedic Unit Medic 1 were on scene. AVFD was performing firefighting efforts on the structure that was on fire, while Medic 1 was tending to patients that were being pulled out of the burning/damaged structures. Marine Corps Marines were surrounding a patient on the ground that had been declared deceased at the scene, due to injuries caused by the incident and covered by a yellow tarp. I made contact with the on scene officer in charge from Antelope Valley Fire Department, Assistant Chief (AC) Jason Foster who was in charge of the incident. I advised him that I would be assuming Incident Command of the emergency and he would remain in charge of Operations as the Operations Officer. At which time, AC Foster provided me a summary of what has taken place, allowing me to be able to paint a picture of the events that had already taken place, a current status and any other actions needed.
5. Mountain Warfare Fire & Emergency Services (MWFES) arrived on scene at approximately the same time as I did, which they were placed in the Operational control of AC Foster for firefighting operations and assisting with the medical needs of the patients. During which time, the incident was named Lincoln Command. Was contact by phone and advised by AVFD Fire Chief Mike Curti, that

Cal-Fire Investigators from the State Fire Marshall's Office was notified. Requested East Fork Fire & Paramedic District Fire Investigator Terry Taylor, but later was advised he was not available.

6. As the Incident Commander, I requested the propane main line be shut down to prevent further potential exposures or structural fires. Requested Red Cross representative for the assist to the families affected from the explosion disaster. Requested through Mono County Dispatch for additional resources from surrounding agencies; East Fork Fire & Paramedic District was notified and responded to the incident. Managed the incident to ensure firefighter safety, property preservation, exposure protection, extinguishment and patient care was handled. East Fork Fire Department Engine 4 and Rescue 4 arrived on scene with Battalion Chief / Training Captain for assistance. At which time, they were placed in as the Safety Officer on scene and provided assistance to the Operational firefighting crews. Care Flight had been notified by Mono County Dispatch in regards to the number of patients needing Advanced Life Support services due to the extent of their injuries. A total of three Care Flight Air EMS assets were requested and landed in the ball fields of the Lincoln Military Housing area, where the two critically burned / injured patients were transported by wheeled ambulance (ALS unit from Mono County Paramedics) to the Landing Zone for the Care Flight helicopters. Two Care Flight units departed with the critically burned leaving one Care Flight helicopter on ground standby. Patients were then loaded and transported to nearby trauma/ burn facilities in Reno or Sacramento. Utilities were secured. Evacuation was accomplished. A second search of the incident site, determined no further patients at which time overhaul operations were conducted to prevent rekindle.

7. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was stood up at the Community Center where the Command conducted coordination and control of the overall incident activities. During this time, it was asked to send a medical officer to the Community Center to provide patient assessment of those affected directly by the explosion blast and the efforts associated with rescuing the victims from the incident location. At which time, I sent MWFES medical crew and Acting Fire Captain, Lieutenant Michael Lightfoot down to the Community Center auditorium to set up a medical triage location for personnel needing direct medical assessment or treatment. While the medical crew was in the Community Center auditorium providing medical patient assessments of those residents who might have been affected by the smoke inhalation, flying insulation debris or other related walk-in emergencies. MWFES medical crew transported one patient with possible back injuries associated with the blast of the explosion since his home was adjacent to the emergency.

8. The incident was terminated and all resources were released at 0107 hours. MWFES remained on scene throughout the evening to ensure no flare ups occurred at the incident location and to assist the Marine Corps Police Department for scene preservation and security reasons.

9. On Saturday morning, MWFES was tasked by the EOC to provide an initial assessment of the surrounding structures to determine habitability conditions. During this time frame, we had several families displaced due to the extent of damages to their homes, utilities and propane being shutdown during the emergency. A validation of the propane system was accomplished with the accompanying Lincoln Housing Maintenance staff and local propane company staff allowing the propane system to be turned back on to the homes not directly affected. Leak checks and safety conditions were conducted with agency crews.

10. I remained on scene during the recovery phase of the emergency allowing the sense of reassurance to the families affected during the incident. Providing propane service checks for leaks and odors associated with concerned family members using a five gas detector. Each and every home was inspected on numerous occasions to ensure life safety issues were not present. Allowing non-affected housing occupants to return to their homes.

February 19, 2012

11. Provided facility inspections and guidance to the families regarding the use of propane and the associated smells with using propane for their home appliances; creating a sense of understanding by the families and allowing a sense of assurance that their homes were safe to live in.

THIS INFORMATION IS TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT HAPPENED AT THE EMERGENCY LOCATED IN COLEVILLE HOUSING. NO FURTHER INFORMATION.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kevin Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

KEVIN M. SULLIVAN

FIRE CHIEF

MOUNTAIN WARFARE FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES